




USDA  

**BRUSH UP YOUR  
CORRESPONDENCE SKILLS**



*Presented by  
Cathy Lonaberger  
Office of the Administrator  
to the  
NACOP Training Workshop  
August 18-19, 2010*

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**Correspondence  
is the Window to  
the Agency !!**

USDA  

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Let's see what **YOU** know  
about correspondence by  
taking a.....

**CORRESPONDENCE  
QUIZ!!!!**

USDA  

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## Let's Review the Correspondence Preparation Notes!!!!



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## Correspondence Tools

- Agricultural Research Service  
Correspondence Manual 261.2  
[www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/261-02mch-1-2.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/261-02mch-1-2.htm)
- Government Printing Office Style Manual  
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/browse.html>
- Other correspondence reference books



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## WHEN TO USE MEMO FORMAT VS. LETTER FORMAT



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## Informal Letters (Memo)

- The informal letter (memo) will be used for most day-to-day communications in the transaction of business within USDA.
- The informal letter may also be used when responding to informal communications from other Federal agencies.
- Chapter 1 ARS Correspondence Manual



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## Formal Letter

- Used for other than routine work or business transactions.
- Formal letter is **always** used for letters addressed to the following:
  - President
  - Vice President
  - Members of Congress
- Chapter 2 ARS Correspondence Manual



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## E-mail

- Designated personnel have authority to send ARS-All
- Printed e-mail is the official record
- Follow records management retention policy
- Proofread all e-mails
- Teresa McDuffie Frye, 301-504-1017



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## Informational & Decision Memos

- REE requests all memos to be signed by Under Secretary to be in Decision or Informational format.
- Informational and Decision Memos for the Secretary require the original and three letterhead copies (Cage) of the original, all other copy requirements remain the same.



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## Helpful Notes

- Enclosures are part of the correspondence and must be proofed.
- If a document has been returned for corrections, always include the old yellow file copy and add another legend line with current information.
- Always use plastic protectors for correspondence forwarded to another office for review/signature.
- When new/revised correspondence instructions are received, they will be forwarded to you via e-mail.



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## Proofreading Tips

- Start at the top of the document (including letterhead)
- Proof from hard copy; do not proof from the screen
- Ask co-worker to proof document



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### Proofreading Tips

- Read aloud the document while co-worker follows on hard copy
- Use spell check
- Use ruler method




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### Last Minute Checks

- Always make use of Spell Check
- Proofread **more than once**
- Supervisor initials yellow on legend line
- Envelopes are provided




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### Proper Clearance and Correspondence Questions:

1. Unit Secretary
2. Laboratory/Center Director Secretary
3. Area Director Secretary
4. Correspondence Management Unit at Headquarters (301-504-4513)




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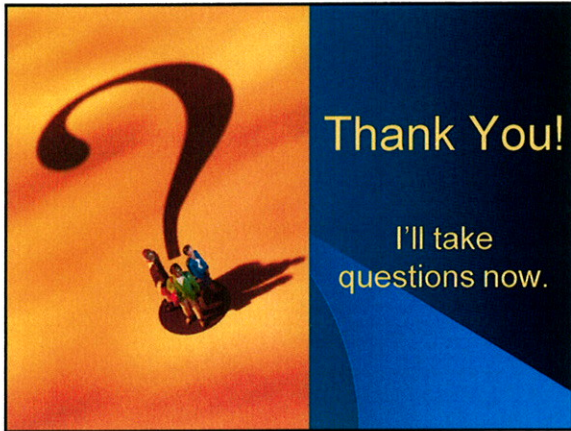
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